

REINVESTING IN YOUTH

A Regional Partnership

2005 First Quarter Report

May 9, 2005

Dear Friends of Reinvesting in Youth:

We are pleased to provide you with this report on Reinvesting in Youth's (RIY) activities in the first quarter of 2005. 2004 was a very significant year, and the success the RIY management team has accomplished can be contributed to the many regional partners who share RIY's commitment to changing young people's lives for the better.

I. Research - Based Program Expansion

The centerpiece of Reinvesting in Youth's "Reinvestment" strategy is the expansion of research - based interventions that have a proven track record in reducing juvenile recidivism and in saving more public dollars than they cost. There has been significant progress made since the initiative was launched in 2003.

The savings reinvestment strategy assumes that, starting in 2005, the Reinvesting in Youth foundation dollars will begin to be replaced by state and county savings and that by 2007 foundation funds will be fully replaced. Subject to further analysis, our best estimates are that these expanded programs will save state, county and local governments operating costs of \$1,780,000 per year after six years.

The Community Functional Family Therapy (FFT) team which consists of Ruth Dykeman Children's Center (RDCC) (lead agency), Auburn Youth Resources, Kent Youth and Family Services, Renton Area Youth and Family Services, Southeast Youth and Family Services, Southwest Youth and Family Services continues to develop. In February, Southeast Youth Family Service Center hired a FFT therapist, which brought the team to its capacity of 6 therapists. The contract with FFT Incorporated has been renewed, and they brought on a new consultant for quality assurance for the Community Team. Referrals to the Team were low this quarter, so RDCC, King County Community Services Division, and King County Juvenile Court are working to increase referrals.

Ruth Dykeman's Aggression Replacement Training (ART) trainer is in the last stage of her training and will be certified to teach her own class in the 2nd quarter of 2005. In January RDCC began the process of hiring a second ART trainer.

II. Sustaining Intervention Services Expansion – Saving Reinvestment

The 2005 legislative session registered a landmark in Reinvesting in Youth's efforts to implement a state-wide funding strategy based on the reinvestment of savings that result from expenditures on cost effective intervention and prevention programs. On April 24 the State Legislature approved a budget that includes \$1,000,000 for the "Reinvesting in Youth" program. \$600,000 of that amount will come to King County to sustain county investments in evidence-based programs that address the needs of youth and families who are involved in the juvenile justice system. The remainder will go to other counties as part of a 2-year pilot to test the strategy state-wide.

This is a very important step and one RIY have worked long and hard to bring about. It is important to King County because it keeps the county on track to eliminate the need for foundation funds by the end of 2006 / early 2007. It is good for the state because it lays the groundwork for the permanent implementation of state-wide juvenile justice funding reform.

It is not a perfect result. The 2-year pilot is part of the Biennium Appropriations Bill including budget proviso. RIY supported a separate bill that included the pilot and the \$1,000,000, but also provided for the long-term implementation of the "Reinvesting in Youth" program for all counties in future biennia (keeping in mind that nothing is really "permanent" that requires a budget appropriation every 2 years). The RIY bill passed the House of Representatives 85-0 and passed the Senate policy committee 7-0 but got caught in the end of session log jam in the Senate Ways and Means Committee. This had nothing to do with the merits of the bill, but rather with Senate leadership strategies that affected a number of bills in the same way.

It is also of concern that the source of the funding was realignment of existing prevention (but not evidence based) program funding. This indicates that some legislators have not yet fully embraced the concept that savings from incarceration and other deep-end expenditures is the basis for increased funding of prevention. Nevertheless, at a time when the legislature was facing the need for tax increases just to avoid other deep cuts in essential services, the full funding of the Reinvesting in Youth pilot program was a significant achievement. The budget proviso calls for a report back to the legislature by June 30, 2006.

III. Capacity Building

Reinvesting in Youth has allocated approximately \$883,000 over 2003-2006 for strengthening the capacity of community – based agencies serving youth at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system with a particular emphasis on reducing the disproportional involvement of youth of color in that system. The strategy focuses on promising program evaluations, cultural competency training and other technical assistance.

Promising Program Evaluation –

In December of 2004 an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the promising program evaluation design developed by Davis Y. Ja and Associates. In January of 2005 the evaluation design was modified to add three alternative program sites. The three sites are King County

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs, the BECCA program and King County Juvenile Court administered Functional Family Therapy.

At the beginning of the year each of the five evaluation sites completed their database and statistical files. With their databases installed the sites were technically prepared to begin collecting baseline enrollment data for the first cohort of youth in their programs. In February, Davis Ja facilitated a meeting with all evaluation sites to explain the initial data entry procedures.

In April RIY enlisted John Baer PhD. from the University of Washington to provide three half day Motivational Interview (MI) trainings for the case management and management staff of the five agencies participating in the promising program evaluation

Cultural Competency Assessment and Training – RIY and the Minority Executive Directors Coalition of King County (MEDC) finalized and signed a contract on June 3, 2004. This initial contract provides for cultural competency assessments, action plans and trainings for the six agencies that have been selected to receive promising program evaluation support. MEDC has developed a strategy for the cultural competency assessments, conducted a cultural competency orientation workshop and completed assessments and action plans for all six agencies. Technical assistance to support implementation of the action plans began in January of 2005.

Agencies throughout King County have expressed strong interest in receiving the Cultural Competency Action Plan and Technical Assistance module. In March of this year RIY and MEDC extended their relationship by signing a new contract. The contract would direct MEDC to work with four new agencies to conduct cultural competency assessments based on analysis and interpretation of the previously developed self-assessment tool, interviews and other assessment information. In addition, MEDC will also assist the four agencies to develop action plans and to implement technical assistance.

With the renewed funding commitments RIY received from the Gates and Allen Foundations, four more agencies will start in July. At this point RIY projects that the total cost of the cultural competency project for 14 agencies will be \$175,000.

RIY facilitated a “Fish Bowl” community forum on Cultural Competency on April 4, 2005. Agencies from throughout King County were invited to learn from the experiences of the first six agencies. MEDC lead the discussion and the six agencies provided a rich and informative dialogue on what lessons they have learned in the area of cultural competency. RIY’s objective is to learn more about what is needed for the development of a *system* of cultural competency assessment and training for community based agencies in King County.

Technical Assistance/Elements of Successful Programs – The RIY 2003-2006 budget allocates \$400,000 to technical assistance. The emphasis is on strengthening community-based agencies’ capacity to reduce the disproportional involvement of youth of color in the justice system. Since the beginning of 2004, RIY has contributed \$15,000 to the development of an “Elements of Successful Programs” portfolio focused on programs that serve high risk youth. A group of local and regional government stakeholders and agency representatives met in January to discuss potential strategies to distribute, administer, and implement the Elements to community based agencies throughout King County. In February the group of stakeholders approved a draft of the portfolio and presented it before the King County Juvenile Justice Evaluation Work Group (JJEWG) for approval and authorization to distribute the document to community agencies throughout King County.

In March two “beta tests” of the portfolio and assessment tool were conducted at Kent Youth and Family Services and Southwest Youth and Family Services. The purpose of the beta tests was to assess the applicability of the assessment tool and to learn more about how best to administer it. Discussion and planning are currently underway to develop the most effective strategy to administer the portfolio to community agencies throughout King County. RIY has dedicated \$200,000 to be used to bring the *Elements of Successful Programs* into community-based agencies during 2005-06.

IV. RIY Program Funding

The Paul G. Allen and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grants were renewed in March 2005 in the amounts of \$300,000 and \$350,000 respectively. As a result grant funds from the Gates, Allen, JEHT, Seattle, and Annie E. Casey foundations, combined with the State Reinvesting in Youth pilot program, are sufficient to support RIY activities through the end of 2006. The City of Seattle, King County, Port of Seattle and 11 suburban cities have continued to fund the administrative costs of RIY at a projected amount of \$240,000 in 2005.

Local government support has been a crucial factor in our ability to attract foundation support and is an essential part of full program funding through project completion at the end of 2006.

V. Conclusion

While there are many challenges still to be met by RIY including final passage of the savings reinvestment legislation, significant progress is being made on many fronts. Each of our activities is governed by our dual objectives: 1) to improve the lives of individual youth and families; and 2) to contribute to the development of *systems* that will sustain juvenile justice and youth services reforms after the Reinvesting in Youth project is complete.

Thank you for your support for Reinvesting in Youth.

Sincerely,

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